

**SITUATION REPORT NO. 18**  
**INCIDENT NO. 97-015**  
**DATE: APRIL 11, 1997      TIME: 12:00 P.M.**

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer  
State Capitol  
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: A LaMoure County man, who had been operating an inadequately-ventilated generator during a power outage, has died of carbon monoxide poisoning. In Divide County, a motorist was killed and his passenger injured on April 10 when their vehicle struck a washout on a rural Crosby road that had been closed to traffic. To date, eight people have died as a result of problems created by the winter storm and flooding.

More than 30 North Dakotans have been treated for carbon monoxide poisoning caused by inadequately-ventilated equipment. Latest victims include two Dickey County residents and two employees of a Richland County business. The State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) continues also to receive reports of people suffering from hypothermia. Latest victims include two elderly Walsh County women. Also in Walsh County, a public works employee broke his ankle when he slipped and fell while trying to clean a rotary snow plow. Others injured include two Wahpeton public works employees, who collapsed with chest pains and were later diagnosed to be suffering from exhaustion.

3. DAMAGES: The Red River of the North at Fargo reached its flood of record early April 11 as residents reinforced sandbags and earthen dikes. No major breaches have occurred in dikes protecting Fargo. However, breakouts are occurring along dikes in the Sheyenne River Diversion in West Fargo. There, the diversion continues nearly two feet above its flood of record stage, but has receded slightly. Homeowners in the area, who have been without power since April 5, are battling flooding-related problems, including inundated basements.

As flood waters flowed over the highway, the N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT) closed I-29 at Harwood on April 10. The N.D. Highway Patrol has established control points at three locations: I-29 at the N.D. Highway 200 A junction; I-29 at Cass County Road 20; and I-94 at the Casselton exit. Motorists will be directed to N.D. Highway 18, N.D. Highways 1 and 32 and U.S. Highway 83. N.D. National Guard members will staff the control points. Cass County officials report that ice chunks are flowing over N.D. Highway 81, which parallels I-29.

Overland flooding from the Sheyenne River forced the evacuation on April 10 of six people and two dogs living northwest of Fargo. The crew of a U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue helicopter stationed in Fargo responded to the evacuation.

The Weather Service reports the status of North Dakota rivers and tributaries above flood stage are as follows:

| Station                   | Flood 4/11/97 | 24-hr            | Flood of  |            |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------|------------|
|                           | Stage         | Stage Difference | Record    |            |
| <u>Red River</u>          |               |                  |           |            |
| Wahpeton                  | 10 ft.        | 15.94 ft.        | -0.12 ft. | 19.2 ft.   |
| Fargo                     | 17 ft.        | 37.47 ft.        | +0.68 ft. | 37.5 ft.   |
| Halstad, MN               | 24 ft.        | (Not available)  |           | 39 ft.     |
| Hickson                   | 30 ft.        | 36.45 ft.        | -0.34 ft. |            |
| East Grand Forks          | 28 ft.        | 41.91 ft.        | +0.42 ft. | 48.8 ft.   |
| <u>Wild Rice</u>          |               |                  |           |            |
| Abercrombie               | 10 ft.        | (Not available)  |           | 24.6 ft.   |
| <u>Maple River</u>        |               |                  |           |            |
| Enderlin                  | 6 ft.         | 8.36 ft.         | -0.05 ft. | 15.4 ft.   |
| <u>Sheyenne River</u>     |               |                  |           |            |
| Cooperstown 12 ft.        |               | 17.65 ft.        | -0.56 ft. | 18.69 ft.  |
| Lisbon                    | 11 ft.        | (Not available)  |           | 19 ft.     |
| Kindred                   | 16 ft.        | 21.62 ft.        | -0.10 ft. | 21.7 ft.   |
| <u>Sheyenne Diversion</u> |               |                  |           |            |
| Horace                    | 23 ft.        | 23.76 ft.        | +0.19 ft. | No record  |
| West Fargo                | 16.5 ft.      | 23.06 ft.        | -0.16 ft. | 21.5 ft.   |
| Harwood                   | 884 ft.       | 891.96 ft.       | +0.03 ft. | 890.70 ft. |
| <u>Souris River</u>       |               |                  |           |            |
| Foxholm                   | 10 ft.        | 11.27 ft.        | -2.05 ft. | 17.71 ft.  |
| Bantry 11 ft.             |               | 12.83 ft.        | +3.45 ft. | 14.6 ft.   |
| Westhope                  | 10 ft.        | 11 ft.           | -0.08 ft. | 19.2 ft.   |

Red River tributaries in the Grand Forks area have already begun draining into the Red River, which could lower its anticipated crest of 49 feet. However, the N.D. State Water Commission officials cautioned that warmer temperatures could cause a rapid snowmelt and increase inflows into the river.

As the Sheyenne River at Kindred remains above 21 feet for more than a week, the State Water Commission reports breakouts are occurring along the river's dike near to N.D. Highway 46. The river at Kindred recorded a new flood of record when it reached 21.87 feet on April 8; its previous flood of record had been 21.7 feet.

The N.D. Agriculture Statistics Service reports that the recent, intense blizzard increased livestock stress and is increasing livestock losses. The losses as reported have risen to 60 percent above normal.

State and local officials are monitoring western North Dakota rivers, including those in the Souris and Missouri River Basins, where a fast melt of snow that fell during the April 5-6 blizzard could cause additional flooding problems.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from the first report.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: No change from the first and second reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: A Disaster Relief Task Force has been formed by Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Family Service, Aid Association for Lutherans, Lutheran Brotherhood, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church. The Disaster Relief Task Force is making available a variety of products and equipment for emergency response. Items include generators, sump pumps, wet vacuums, bottled water, and personal hygiene products. The task force will also address unmet needs. Members may be contacted by calling (800) 950-2901 or by fax, (701) 235-7359.

Volunteers in Richland County are working around the clock to answer the Disaster Hotline at the county's Emergency Operations Center.

Approximately 40 N.D. Civil Air Patrol members throughout North Dakota are assisting the city of Grand Forks, the American Red Cross and the Grand Forks Air Force Base with sandbagging efforts.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Vice President Al Gore plans to talk with Fargo flood victims and tour flood-stricken Red River areas on April 11. The Vice President will be accompanied by the St. Paul District Engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Secretary of Transportation and North Dakota's congressional delegation.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will open a Disaster Field Office (DFO) on April 14 at 600 South Second Street in Bismarck. FEMA's Mobile Emergency Response Service vehicle will arrive in Bismarck on April 12 to set up the DFO. Initial estimates indicate the DFO will be staffed by more than 100 people.

A total of 175 Army Guard and 45 Air Guard members supported flood-fight efforts on April 10. The National Guard has 24 missions underway and has completed 61. Requests were pending for three additional missions. National Guard members are providing sandbag machines to communities, transporting sandbags, providing traffic control, sending generators to communities without electrical power and providing aerial support to power companies viewing damages.

As a precautionary measure, officials for the Veterans Administration hospital in Fargo are evacuating one-half of the patients to the Veterans Administration hospital in St. Cloud, Minn.

Gen. David Bramlett, commander of U. S. Army Forces Command, is scheduled to arrive in Bismarck on April 12, where he will visit the Defense Coordinating Officer and the Defense Coordinating Element, activated in response to flooding. The Defense Coordinating Element, assigned to the State Emergency Operations Center, helped arrange for a C-5A air transport to deliver 10 large generators that FEMA is sending to North Dakota. The other 40 are being shipped by ground.

The N.D. Civil Air Patrol conducted two surveillance flights of the Red River Valley on April 10. Representatives of the State Water Commission and Weather Service viewed the Red River and its tributaries, from Fargo to Wahpeton. The air crew of the second flight flew over the Red River area north of Grand Forks for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The N.D. Department of Health is advising North Dakotans about how to address problems created when flood waters mix with fuel oil. Homeowners should contact David Glatt, the Department of Health's Division of Water Quality assistant director, at 328-5210 for advice.

State agencies responding to the disaster met with approximately 120 members of the State Legislative Assembly on April 10. The group discussed the interagency effort required to address problems created by the flood.

During the April 5-6 storm, volunteer firefighters evacuated five elderly Adams County residents who were without power at their homes. In LaMoure County, five people were rescued after being stranded in a vehicle for more than 14 hours. The Sheriff's Office used a snowmobile to deliver oxygen to a stranded individual.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: None at this time.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: The Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

The N.D. State Water Commission posts flood-related information on its Internet home page. The address is "<http://water.swc.state.nd.us>". The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a "Water Control Home Page" at "<http://www.ncs-wc.usace.army.mil>". The U.S. Geological Survey's Internet home page address is: "<http://srv1dndbmk.cr.usgs.gov/public/>".

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Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director